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New Acquisitions Now on View at the CMA

Recently Acquired Silk Velvet to be Unveiled After Conservation Treatment

CLEVELAND — Now on view at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) are the following new acquisitions: works of art on paper by Henri Matisse, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, James Brooks, and André Kertész; the oil sketch *In the Surf* by Cincinnati-born Edward H. Potthast; a French glass centerpiece; and a ceramic plate by Clevelander Viktor Schreckengost. Most are from the late 19th and early 20th century. They will remain on view for about three months, except for the works on paper, which will be exchanged the week of July 30 with a lithograph by John Wilson and photographs by Joel Meyerowitz and Robert ParkeHarrison. The museum also purchased its first luxury silk from India's Mughal court (from the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, 1658–1707); it will undergo conservation work to prepare it for future exhibition.

The Matisse, called simply *The Large Woodcut*, is rare. Although Matisse (French, 1869–1954) made about 800 prints, only four are woodcuts, and this is an example of the one considered most important. Created in 1906, *The Large Woodcut* is based on a black-ink drawing of 1905–06 emphasizing the outline and contours of a nude woman in a deck chair.

The slightly later *White Dancer in a Small Nightclub* (1914), a lithograph by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938) is one of many works by this artist focused on decadence in Berlin life on the eve of World War I. In it, bold, slashing strokes describe the frenetic movements of the harshly lit performer and leering male audience (including Kirchner smoking a cigar in the lower right corner). This is the only known impression of the first state, before Kirchner darkened the scene.

An *Untitled* drawing from 1952 by James Brooks (American, 1906–1992) represents a type of abstraction previously missing from CMA's drawing collection, with the gestural quality of "action painting" for which Brooks's friend Jackson Pollock is known. Here the artist, whose renown first came from social realist murals for the Works Progress Administration, used a brightly colored palette of yellow in combination with white and dark blue paint, applied with dripping, traditional brushwork, and some frottage (rubbing with a flat instrument to create pattern and texture).

André Kertész (American, born Hungary, 1894–1985) produced a landmark body of work, the Distortion Series, from which the museum's newly acquired *Distortion #150* comes, that was

unprecedented in the history of the medium. The series emerged from an assignment Kertész accepted from the humorous and risqué French magazine *Le Sourire*. Using parabolic (i.e., funhouse) mirrors he found at a flea market, and nude female models, Kertész created figural images at once foreshortened and elongated, seemingly concrete and abstract. The museum's photograph is a rare example of prints he made of exhibition size (11-9/16" x 9 ") on single-weight, low-contrast paper.

In the Surf (about 1914) exemplifies the carefree New York and New England beach scenes for which Edward Potthast (American, 1861–1927) gained a reputation after his exposure to Impressionism in Paris. It comes to the CMA collection as a partial gift of Virginia Rose Glidden and her family. Harold Glidden, an ancestor, bought it in 1914 from the Fifth Exhibition of American Oil Paintings at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. A second oil sketch beach scene is on the back of the panel.

The glass centerpiece with gilt mounts (about 1880) from the Paris firm of Escalier de Cristal reflects the interest in things Japanese that was an important element of luxury goods of the time, especially the swimming fish cast in relief into the glass and the naturalistic details of the pine cone and twig shapes of the mounts. Responsibility for the design of the glass vessel can be attributed to Eugène Rousseau (1827–1891).

Leda and the Swan (1931–32) is the title of a large ceramic plate, one of a series produced by Viktor Schreckengost (born 1906) shortly after his return to Cleveland from a year of study in Vienna. It was included in the recent major CMA exhibition **Viktor Schreckengost and 20th-Century Design**. Gene and Viktor Schreckengost have given it in honor of the museum staff.

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The museum's rare complete, five-color silk velvet cover exemplifies the most prestigious textiles at the 17th-century Mughal court in India. It is the museum's first luxurious textile of the court art of Mughal India in the second half of the 17th century.

Measuring 8'4" x 5'2", it may have been used in numerous ways: as a wall hanging, throne cover or awning, horse or elephant trapping, or floor covering, including as part of a true "red carpet treatment" in which hundreds of red velvets (red symbolizing royalty) were laid on the ground to create a path on which only the emperor walked. The pattern of the cover displays a field with a central floral medallion with four quarter medallions in the corners, plus scrolling blue-green vines bearing ivory and pale blue blossoms; and a border with symmetrical floral and leafy vines. Iris, chrysanthemum, dianthus, and narcissus are identifiable in the scheme.

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For more information about the CMA and its programs and events, call **1-888-CMA-0033** or visit **www.clevelandart.org**.

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